



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

For Immediate Release

Contact: Deb Varga (401) 462-0192
dvarga@bhddh.ri.gov
BHDDH Media Relations

Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals Receives Approval for Health Homes Program

Cranston, RI, November, 2011 - A state plan amendment for Medicaid Health Homes, submitted by the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (BHDDH) in collaboration with the state Medicaid authority of the Office of Health & Human Services (OHHS), was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) on Wednesday, November 23. The amendment provides BHDDH with enhanced federal funding for the coordination of physical care and behavioral healthcare for individuals who have serious and persistent mental health conditions.

According to a technical report developed by the Medical Directors' Council of the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors (NASMHPD), persons with serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI) are now dying 25 years earlier than the general population. For this reason, and because a high percentage of people with mental health conditions have co-morbidities, CMS, in conjunction with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), recognized that there are many in this population who can be better served when physical care is coordinated with behavioral healthcare.

Those individuals who are on Medicaid and have serious and persistent mental health conditions are eligible and automatically enrolled in the program. Health Homes teams will be located at all BHDDH-licensed community mental health organizations (CMHOs) in Rhode Island. CMHOs will be responsible for establishing their own integrated service networks. Depending on the needs of the person, six services are available: comprehensive care management, care coordination, individual and family support services, health promotion, comprehensive transitional care, and referrals to community and social support services.

“Rhode Island is the first state in the country to address coordinated care for individuals with serious mental illness and to discuss peer supports in a health homes state plan amendment”, said Craig Stenning, Director of BHDDH. “This amendment transforms the mental health system as we know it. Coordinated care allows this population to be treated sooner, in less expensive settings, and to receive preventative services at the same time.”

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With the implementation of this program, there is an expectation of cost savings across inpatient hospital settings and emergency room care systems. The results for individuals will be longer lives, fewer emergency room visits, better access to both physical and behavioral health care, and a decline in the number of hospitalizations.

The Health Home amendment also provides funding for children with special health care needs and their families who receive services through the Department of Human Services' CEDARR (Comprehensive Evaluation, Diagnosis, Assessment, Referral & Re-evaluation) initiative.

About the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.

BHDDH is committed to assuring access to quality services and support for Rhode Islanders with developmental disabilities, mental health and substance abuse issues and chronic, long-term medical and psychiatric conditions. In addition to planning for the development of new services and prevention activities, the department's mission includes addressing the stigma attached to these disabilities.

About the National Association of State Mental Health Program Directors

NASMHPD represents state executives responsible for the \$36.7 billion public mental health service delivery system serving 6.7 million people annually in all 50 states, 4 territories, and the District of Columbia. NASMHPD operates under a cooperative agreement with the National Governor's Association.

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